

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TOKYO 05298 230014Z

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ACTION EA-14

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CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

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TAGS: PINT JA

SUBJ: LOCAL ELECTIONS HELD APRIL 21

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

SUMMARY: ON APRIL 21, LDP CANDIDATES WON KYOTO UPPER HOUSE BY-ELECTION, NIGATA GUBERNATORIAL ELECTION, AND VIRTUALLY ALL OF 23 LOCAL MAYORAL ELECTIONS. WHILE NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENTATIVE OF UPSURGE IN LDP STRENGTH, ELECTION RESULTS UNDERSCORE FACT THAT PARTY STILL HAS WIDESPREAD VOTER SUPPORT.

1. ON APRIL 21, FORMER DIET MEMBER HANJI OGAWA (LDP) OUT-DISTANCED THREE OTHER CANDIDATES TO WIN KYOTO HOUSE OF COUNCILLORS BY-ELECTION HELD TO FILL SEAT VACATED BY KAZUTAKO OHASHI (JSP) WHO RAN IN APRIL 7 KYOTO GUBERNATORIAL ELECTION. OGAWA RECEIVED 290,514 VOTES (37 PERCENT). OTHER CONTENDERS WERE: HIROKO FUJIWARA (JCP, 261,690; KATSUHIKO TAKEUCHI (KOMEITO), 147,535; AND AKIRA TAKEMURA (JSP) 82,322. VOTING RATE WAS 47 PERCENT.

2. AS RESULT OF BY-ELECTION, PARTY LINE-UP IN UPPER HOUSE NOW IS: LDP (134), JSP (59), KOMEITO (23), DSP (11), JCP (11), NIIN CLUB (4), INDEPENDENTS (2) AND VACANCIES (8).

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PAGE 02 TOKYO 05298 230014Z

3. WHILE OGAWA WAS WINNING IN KYOTO, FELLOW LDP MEMBER

TAKEO KIMI, WHO HAS RESIGNED UPPER HOUSE SEAT TO ENTER RACE, WON LANDSLIDE VICTORY IN NIIGATA GUBERNATORIAL ELECTION HELD SAME DAY. KIMI GAINED 619,244 VOTES, WHILE JSP OPPONENT TOSHIAKI MATSUZAWA RECEIVED 322,483 AND JCP CANDIDATE YOSABURO URAWAWA TRAILED FAR BEHIND WITH 100,904. VOTER TURNOUT WAS 66 PERCENT.

4. IN ADDITION TO WINS IN KYOTO AND NIIGATA, LDP AND LDP-BACKED CANDIDATES APPEAR TO HAVE MADE CLEAN SWEEP OF MAYORAL ELECTIONS ALSO HELD APRIL 21. WITH VOTE COUNTING STILL UNDERWAY IN FOUR CITIES, CONSERVATIVES HAD ALREADY BEEN ELECTED OR REELECTED TO 19 OF 23 MAYORSHIPS. NOTEWORTHY VICTORIES INCLUDED THOSE IN OBIHIRO (HOKKAIDO) AND NAKAMURA (KOCHI) WHICH CHOSE CONSERVATIVE MAYORS FOR FIRST TIME IN 19 YEARS AND 12 YEARS RESPECTIVELY. OTHER IMPORTANT WINS CAME IN CHIBA CITY AND FUCHU CITY (TOKYO), WHERE LDP (WITH DSP SUPPORT) FOUGHT HOTLY CONTESTED CAMPAIGNS AGAINST OPPOSITION COALITIONS.

5. COMMENT: WHILE LDP ONE-DAY VICTORY TALLY WAS IMPRESSIVE, ESPECIALLY SINCE IT INCLUDED WINS IN SOME LOCALES LONG DOMINATED BY OPPOSITION, MOST OF SUCCESSES CAME IN TRADITIONAL CONSERVATIVE STRONGHOLDS. MOREOVER, LDP WAS NO DOUBT AIDED BY FACT THAT, PARTICULARLY SINCE KYOTO GUBERNATORIAL IMBROGLIO, OPPOSITION PARTIES HAVE BEEN EXPERIENCING GREAT DIFFICULTY ACHIEVING ANY SEMBLANCE OF EFFECTIVE ELECTORAL COOPERATION. WHILE NOT DENIGRATING CONSERVATIVE GAINS ON APRIL 21, FOR PURPOSES OF PERSPECTIVE IT IS ALSO WELL TO KEEP IN MIND THAT, AS SHOWN BY AUTONOMY MINISTRY STATISTICS, LDP HAS BEEN GENERALLY LOSING GROUND IN LOCAL ELECTIONS CONDUCTED OVER LAST YEAR OR SO. HOWEVER, SUNDAY RESULTS DID UNDERSCORE FACT THAT LDP IS STILL ONGOING ENTERPRISE WITH WIDE SUPPORT BASE IN MANY AREAS.
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